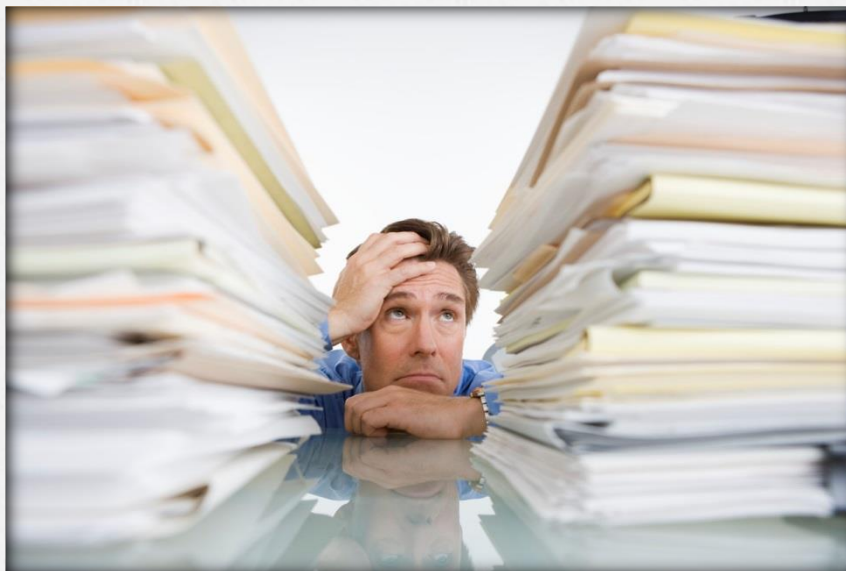


# Beginning to Manage Stress



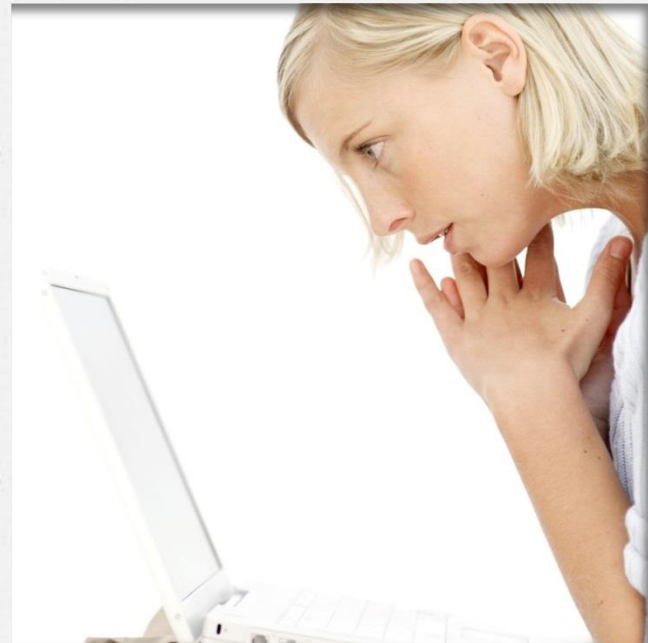
*A partnership of the*  
**State of New Hampshire Employee Assistance Program**  
**NH Department of Health and Human Services**  
*and the*  
**Risk Management Unit**  
**NH Department of Administrative Services**



Ver. 12/13/16

# **Taking A First Step to Managing Workplace Stress**

**This presentation will provide you with a model that is filled with practical tips and strategies to prevent and reduce your experience with stress.**





# **How does it affect you?**

**Hundreds of years ago, stress occurred  
only a few times a week.  
Today, it occurs hundreds of times a day.**

**This increased frequency of stressors  
leads to higher stress levels  
for many people.**

# Stress By the Numbers

- 66% of the general population experienced stress in the past two weeks, with almost 50% rating it as moderate or high stress.
- 44% of Americans report that their stress levels have increased over the past 5 years.
- 49% of Americans cite job security as a source of stress — up from 44% last year.



*Experts estimate that between 75 and 90% of all doctor visits are for stress-related conditions.*

# Stress Defined

## stress/stres/

### NOUN

1. pressure or tension exerted on a material object.
2. a state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or very demanding circumstances.
3. particular emphasis or importance.

### VERB

1. give particular emphasis or importance to (a point, statement, or idea) made in speech or writing.
2. subject to pressure or tension.
3. cause mental or emotional strain or tension in.



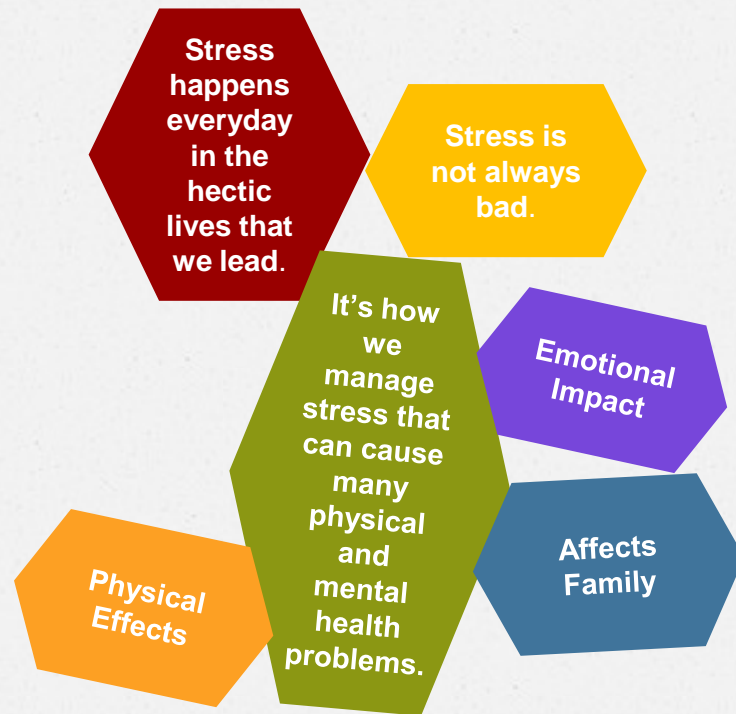
# A Great Definition of Job Stress

*When the demands  
placed on you  
exceed your ability  
to meet those demands.*



# Putting The Pieces Together

**What can we  
do to change  
the way we  
experience  
stress in  
our lives?**



# The Porter “6 A” Stress Prevention Model

*The art and science of preventing and managing stress.*

**A**ssess: determining the amount and intensity of stress currently being experienced

**A**void: activities and situations that cause undue stress

**A**ppraise: look at every stressful situation rationally

**A**ccept: cope with stress using specific techniques

**A**ctivate: your lifestyle to build resilience

**A**ttune: with others by building a network of support



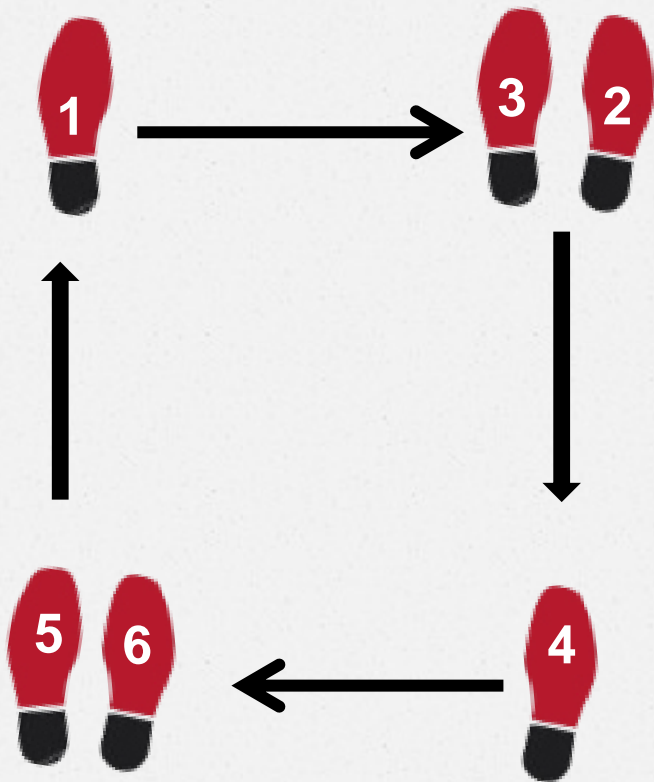
**How can we use this model in the workplace?**

# Taking Steps

## Step 1

### Assess

Assess the demands being placed on you. Figure out what they are, measure them. You can't solve a problem until you know exactly what it is.



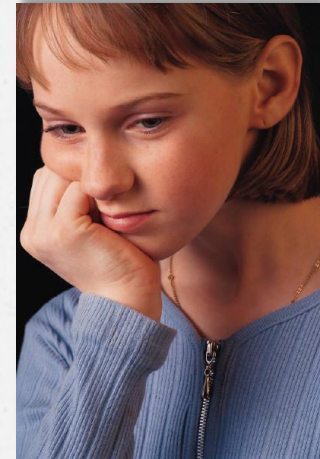
Please click on folder icon for the  
*Perceived Stress Scale* exercise



# Assess

## *Skill:* Am I Stressed?

- Become aware.
- Know your own reactions to stressors.
- Learn to notice little physical and emotional changes that warn you of stress before it gets out of hand.



*Whether the stress is positive or negative,  
the body and mind react the same way.*

# Stress Continuum



**In the Zone**

**Optimistic**

**Effortless**

**Positive Attitude**

**Okay with Stress**

**Unhappy**

**Negative Attitude**

**Troubled**

# Assess

What is your current stress number?



**0**

No tension  
or anxiety

**10**

Panic  
Attack or  
Nervous  
Breakdown

# Let's learn how to use the question:

***“What is your stress number now?”***

**Directions:** Look at your watch. Before the second hand goes around twice, you are going to significantly lower your level of stress and by doing so, learn to regulate your nervous system.

***Let's try.***

Take a minute to read the following instructions before beginning:

- Breathe in deeply (through your nose) to a count of 4.
- Hold that breath in for a count of 4.
- And then, breath out to a count of 6.
- Repeat this cycle 3 times.

What is your stress number now? **0** ----- **10**

If your second number is lower, then you have just done something that Western medicine use to think was impossible. You've regulated your autonomic nervous system.

**How can you use this?**

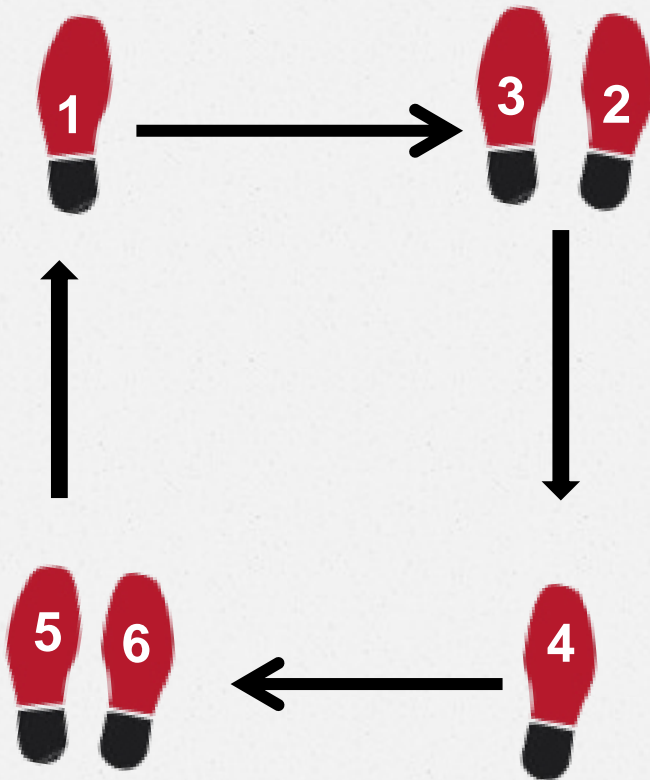
## Step 2

### Avoid

**Avoid unnecessary stress.**

*Use tips like:*

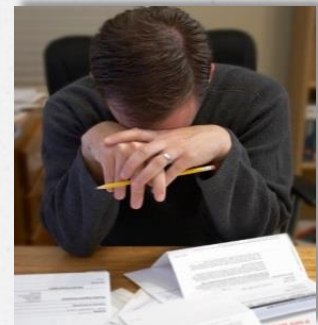
- Delegating
- Planning ahead.
- Learn and practice time management skills.
- Organize, organize, organize...



# Avoid

## *Skill:* Tips to prevent experiencing workplace stress

- Time management
- Allow time between meetings to regroup
- Organizing your workspace
- Wake up 15 minutes early to manage your day
- Journaling



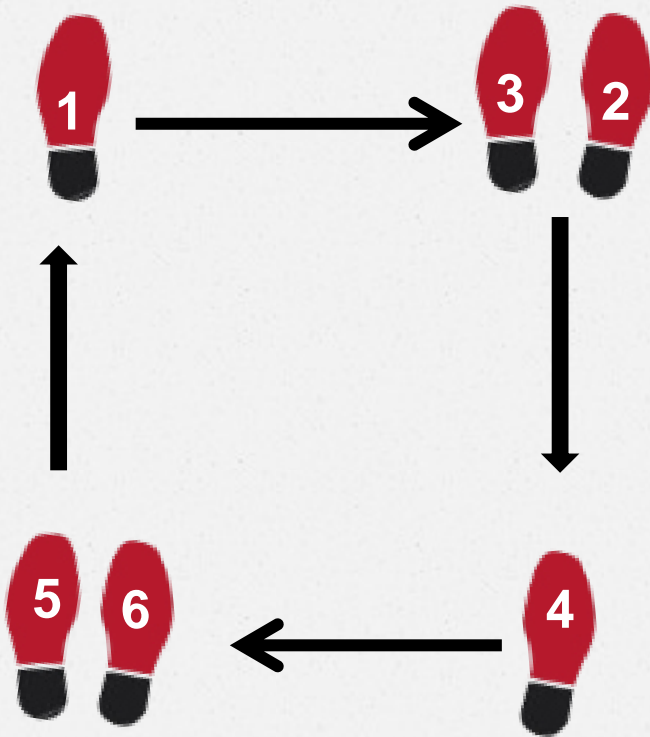
Please click on folder icons if you would like a resource for

*Time Management Tips*



*Inspiring Questions to Journal On*





## Step 3

### Appraise

Look at stressful situations sensibly.



# Appraise

*The way you think can be a major source of stress.*

## ***Skill:*** Five ways to change it:

1. Challenge overly negative thoughts.
2. Be aware of how judgments cause you stress.
3. Limit worry times when you can actually do something about it.
4. Accept what can't be changed.
5. Keep stress in perspective.

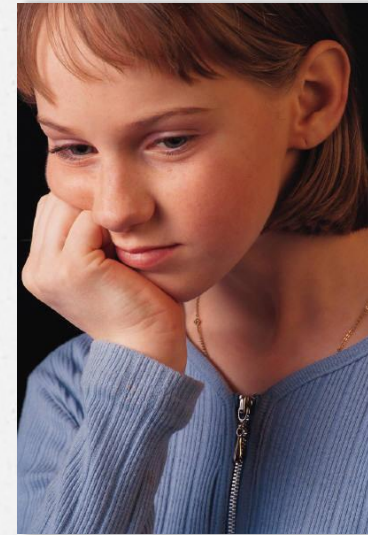
Please click on folder icon for the resource  
*Reprogramming Negative Thoughts*

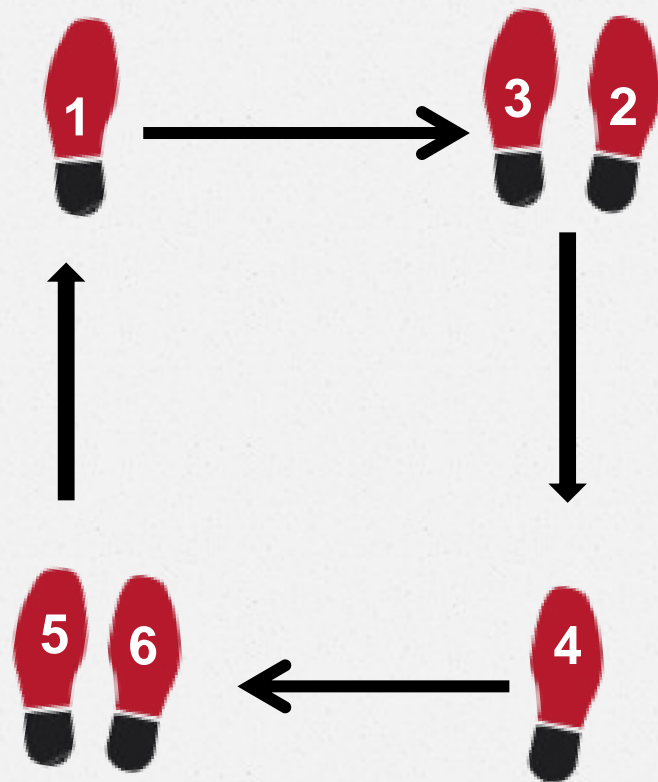


# Appraise

## *Skill:* Reprogramming Negative Thoughts

- Recognize your negative thoughts.
- Make note of the situation.
- Identify how the thought may be **distorted**.
- Actively **change** your perception to be more objective and positive.





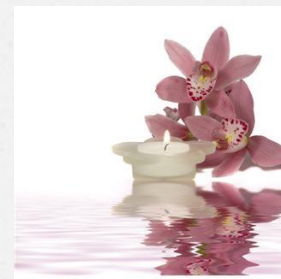
## Step 4

### **Accept**

Accept the reality of a situation and make a decision to address challenges, to the best of your ability

# Accept

***Skill:*** Practice coping statements.



- I can handle these symptoms!
- This too will pass!
- I'll ride this through - I don't need to let this get to me.
- I can take all the time I need to let go and to relax.
- I can do this!
- So what!!

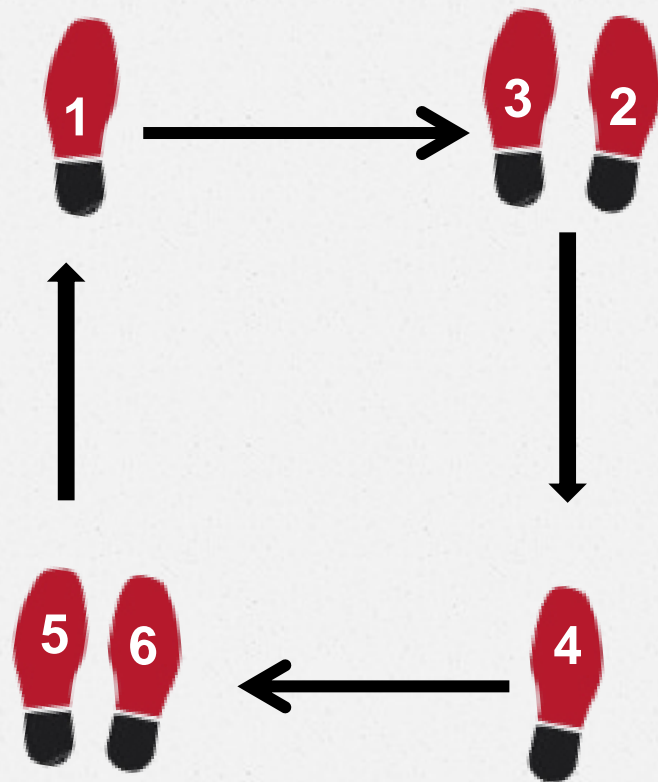
**Exercise:** Think of a situation that causes you stress.

Pause.

Repeat the coping statements from above.

Please click on folder icon for a  
resource on *Acceptance*





## Step 5

### **Activate**

Improve your ability to handle demands by building your coping skills and strengthening your body.

# Activate

## *Skill:* Learn to relax.

*Remaining cool and calm can help you get through the day.*

Relaxation is a **learned** skill and is one way to remain calm.

- Listen to music
- Prayer
- Meditation (e.g. yoga)
- Guided imagery (use of pleasant or relaxing images to relax the mind and body)
- Day dreaming
- Deep breathing exercises
- Progressive relaxation (muscle groups are tightened and then relaxed from head to toe)



# Activate

## *Skill:* Stop stress – right this minute

- Deep breathing takes less than a minute and will significantly lower your stress.
- Changing your thinking requires no time at all and faulty thinking may be the biggest source of your stress.
- When you start looking at stress as a simple problem that needs to be solved, it becomes clearer and doable. This takes about one hour a week when you sit and problem-solve.
- You can easily trade an hour of TV for an hour of meditation, exercise or yoga.



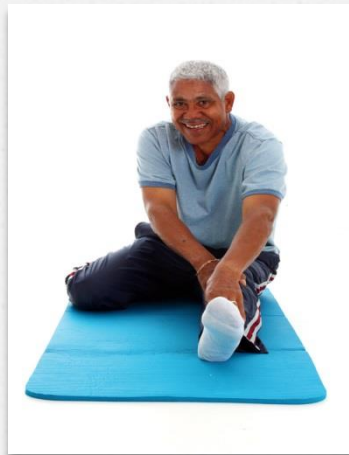
# Activate

These methods will help you self-regulate your autonomic nervous system.

- Relax

- Stretch

- Listen



- Focus

- Visualize

- Vigorous exercise

Please click on folder icon for the resource  
on *Seven Habits of Highly Well People*



# Activate

## *Skill:* Brief Meditation

**Focus on breathe awareness - while sitting, notice every breath you take.**



**Sonic Meditation - for a brief period of time: focus on the sounds you are hearing in the space around you.**

# Activate

## *Skill:* Strengthening the Body

- Exercise
  - 20 minute brisk walk during lunch at work
  - Yoga stretches
- Nutrition
- Sleep – flip your cell phone so you are not distracted by the LED light



# Practice reducing stress through your personal mental attitude.

- Is there a bright side?
- Confront the situation.
- Try to think reasonably.
- How many traps of “I have to,” “I must,” or “I can’t,” do you have?
- Be assertive but not aggressive.
- Use positive self-talk – remember you are the one in control of what you think!
- Use humor and laughter as often as you can.  
It’s a natural stress reliever!

**Here’s what happens when  
you take responsibility...**

***Negative self-talk begins to disappear.***



*Right Now...*

**What is your current stress number?**

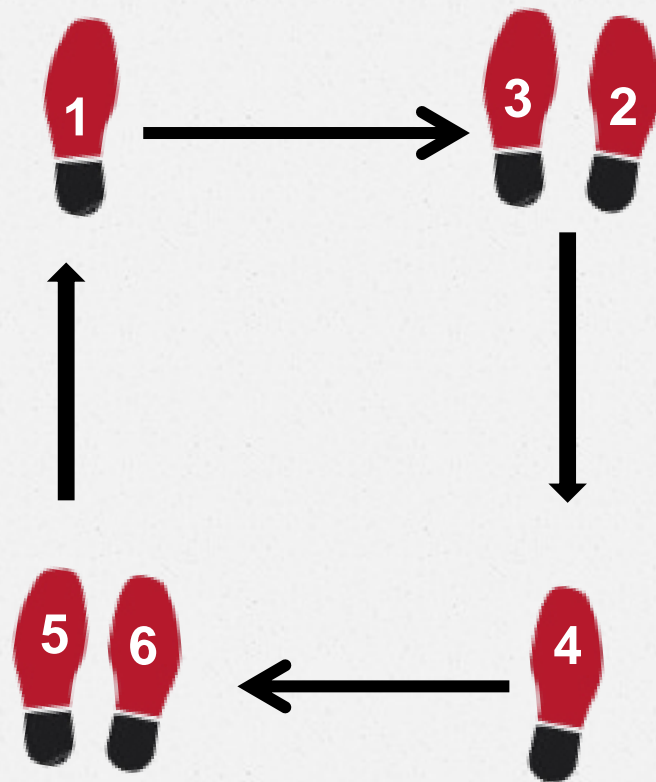


**0**

**No tension  
or anxiety**

**10**

**Panic  
Attack or  
Nervous  
Breakdown**



## Step 6

### Attune

Getting help with demands, through social support or professional assistance. Build a network of helpers to encourage and sustain you when times are tough.

# State of New Hampshire Employee Assistance Program



At EAP we do not give people a direction and say "Go ahead and climb that mountain by yourself." We climb the mountain with you. We assist you through the plan.

*"If we are doing this right, we help people change the way they live their lives. When you think about it, that is pretty profound."*

*- EAP Team*

# Coping Choices

- Options are endless.
- One size doesn't fit all.
- Strategies need to be revised!
- Use these techniques daily: It takes practice.
- Learn new skills.
- Plan.
- Prevention is more effective than reaction.

*It is like learning to ride a bike,  
to rollerblade or to play an  
instrument – once you know it,  
you can use it for life!*



## Remember...

- Resilience is a skill that we can develop and improve upon!
- There are lots of ways to cope with stress and to bounce back from difficulties and setbacks!
- The EAP motto is  
*Healthy people ask for help!*





# Resources



## **State of New Hampshire Employee Assistance Program**

Your EAP services are confidential and voluntary to assist New Hampshire government employees and their families in addressing issues that may affect their overall well-being. The EAP works closely with individuals and families to help: identify issues before they disrupt your personal or professional life; resolve the issues; and improve an employee's ability to carry out his/her job. **Call (603) 271-4336 or visit [www.dhhs.nh.gov/hr/eap/index.htm](http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/hr/eap/index.htm)**

## **State Division of Personnel Bureau of Education and Training**

Provides a unique program of continuing professional training and development opportunities. **For more information, visit [www.admin.state.nh.us/hr/trdev.html](http://www.admin.state.nh.us/hr/trdev.html) or contact your agency benefit representative.**

## **Risk Management Unit Occupational Safety & Health Training Courses**

This program is designed to develop and/or improve the practical skills of employees responsible for administering their agency's health and safety programs. **Visit <http://sunspot.nh.gov/riskManagement/training.aspx> for more information on resources and offerings.**



## **Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield**

- 1. Community Health Education Reimbursement Program (CHERP)** \$150 per family per calendar year towards Anthem approved community health providers offering stress management programs such as yoga, meditation, and mindfulness. Visit [www.admin.state.nh.us/wellness/Wellness\\_Anthem.html](http://www.admin.state.nh.us/wellness/Wellness_Anthem.html) for more information or call Anthem at 1-800-933-8415.
- 2. "Stress Less in the Workplace"** - Two 1-hour worksite workshops. Contact Lisa Marzoli at (603) 845-6180 for more information.
- 3. Healthy Lifestyles Online Program** Offers a Stress Management focus area that is designed to teach you ways to deal with stress that is scientifically designed to reinforce positive stress management habits. [www.admin.state.nh.us/wellness/Wellness\\_RewardProgram.html#Lifestyles](http://www.admin.state.nh.us/wellness/Wellness_RewardProgram.html#Lifestyles)